

**Public Humanities Projects Grants: Instructions for Preparing a Community Conversations Application. (Note that applicants for Community Conversations grants may apply only at the implementation level—not at the planning level.)**

Grants in this category support sustained community-wide projects that engage diverse residents in creatively addressing community challenges, guided by the perspectives of the humanities, or projects that bring the humanities to new audiences. Consider the following examples:

- A state humanities council partners with seven high schools to develop a statewide immigration history project. The project involves students in documenting the experiences of recent immigrants to their communities. It results in a series of podcasts, a radio interview, and a student-curated exhibit that examines the state's immigrant experience.
- Five community colleges design a year-long series of public programs to explore the legacies of war and military service in their communities. Recognizing this as a critical local issue that also has powerful national currency, community leaders and scholars collaborate to produce oral history workshops, lectures, community conversations, and reading programs, all carefully designed to help residents listen to and appreciate the experiences of the veterans in their communities.

**Expected Outcome:**

An ongoing fully-realized discussion series or other face-to-face public program, vigorous marketing and outreach activities, and evaluation of the project's impact.

☐ **Verify your institution's registration or register your institution with Grants.gov.** Complete at least two weeks before the deadline.

☐ **Download the application package from Grants.gov.** The [program resource page](#) on NEH's website has a direct link to the package. You can also search Grants.gov for this program.

☐ **Complete the application using the following guidelines.** The narrative should not assume specialized knowledge, and it should be free of jargon. It should clearly define technical terms so that they are comprehensible to a nonspecialist audience.

**Please note:**

- All project directors will attend a planning meeting at the NEH offices in Washington, D.C. Directors should budget accordingly for a one-day meeting in the first months of the requested grant period.
- As a taxpayer-funded federal agency, NEH endeavors to make the products of its grants available to the broadest possible audience. Discussion programs and other public programs should be free and open to the public.

Please include the following application components:

☐1) **Table of Contents**

List all parts of the application in order with corresponding page numbers.

□2) Application Narrative

Up to **fifteen** single-spaced pages, or **twenty** single-spaced pages for a **Chairman's Special Award**.

Use one-inch margins and at least 11-point type.

A) *Abstract*

- Briefly describe the major elements and significance of the project. Also enter your response as your "Project Description" for question 6 part b of the Application for Federal Domestic Assistance (part of the Grants.gov application package). Note that Grants.gov will accept **no more than 1,000 characters in this field**.

B) *Nature of the request*

In a page or less, provide an overview of the project and its interpretive goals.

- State that you are applying for a grant to support a Community Conversation and include the amount that you are requesting. If you are applying for a Chairman's Special Award or Position in Public Humanities, indicate that.
- Describe the formats, the subject, and the main themes.
- If your project responds to one of the NEH areas of interest described in section I of the guidelines, explain how it does so.

C) *Humanities content*

- Describe the intellectual content and significance of the project, identifying the major humanities ideas, themes, and questions to be explored.
- Address why this topic is important to the intended audiences and what you expect them to learn.
- Explain how ideas and insights drawn from humanities scholarship inform your project.

D) *Project formats*

- Briefly describe all the formats and techniques that you will use to engage general public audiences.

E) *Project resources*

- Describe the resources available at your institution or elsewhere to support your project. Identify such materials as the major book titles, films, archival collections, images, or digital material to be used.
- If applicable, explain how you will secure permissions or rights for key materials.

F) *Project history*

- Give a brief history of the project to date. Describe the relationship of the project to others on the topic and explain what its particular contribution would be.

*G) Chairman's Special Award*

- If the application requests funding at the **Chairman's Special Award** level, explain why the institutional collaborations, number of program formats, and broad reach to audiences make the project a good candidate for that funding level.
- Explain why the project will be unusually significant and appealing, and why it will have exceptionally broad reach nationally.

*H) Audience, marketing, and promotion*

- Describe the expected audience and present a plan for reaching this audience. If applicable, discuss partnerships that would help promote the project.
- If you are proposing special outreach to underserved or at-risk communities, describe your outreach plan and explain how you will engage new audiences in thinking about and discussing humanities ideas.

*I) Evaluation of the project's impact*

- Describe the process and results of any evaluation already conducted.
- Explain how you plan to measure the project's efficacy in meeting the stated learning goals and engaging audiences in thinking about humanities ideas and questions.

*J) Organizational profile*

Provide a short profile of your organization and other major partner organizations (not to exceed one page for your organization and a half page for each collaborating organization). These descriptions should include the institutional mission, origin, and size; annual operating budget; and current activities.

- For partner organizations discuss past collaborations or previous relationships (if any), and indicate the role that each organization will play in this project.

*K) Project team*

- Identify the key staff members who will be involved in the project. Briefly describe each person's qualifications and expected contribution to the project.
- If applicable, list discussion leaders who would conduct local programs and are not part of the core project staff listed elsewhere in the application.

*L) Humanities scholars and consultants*

- Identify the consultants (including humanities scholars) who will be involved in the project. Briefly describe the qualifications and expected contribution to the project of each consultant.

*M) Work plan*

- Provide a detailed month-by-month schedule of the major work to be done during the grant period, the amount of time it will take, and the specific people involved. Make sure to plan for attendance at a project directors' meeting at NEH in the first few months of the grant period.
- State clearly when the meetings with scholars and other consultants will occur, and how the meetings will advance the project.

- Include activities related to planned project evaluation and indicate who will be responsible for each.

#### *N) Project funding*

Describe how project costs in excess of the NEH grant would be met.

### □3. Project Walkthrough

Up to **fifteen** single-spaced pages (**twenty** single-spaced pages for applicants for a Chairman's Special Award)

*Use one-inch margins and at least 11-point type.*

- Describe how the audience will experience the program and how humanities content will be delivered.
- Provide draft agendas for the public programs, including the subject matter of the events or questions to be addressed; the names of speakers, including any scholars, who will address the audience or guide discussions; a description of how the session(s) will be organized (that is, their duration, format, etc.); if you will utilize texts, films, plays, pieces of music, etc., include specific titles and brief annotations explaining how the works in question relate to the project's main theme.
- Identify any venues selected for programs, and describe the criteria that you will use to select additional venues.
- If applicable, describe training workshops and other activities to prepare discussion facilitators, scholars, and other project staff.
- If the project includes secondary formats (such as a website or an exhibition), briefly describe them.

### □4. Résumés and letters of commitment

- List on one page the project team, humanities scholars, and consultants, using the following format: Joan Smith (American studies, University of Maryland), or John Smith (designer, ABC Designs).
- Include résumés (of two pages or less) for each key member of the project team.
- For each humanities scholar and consultant provide a two-page résumé and a letter of commitment stating his or her intention to work on the project and his or her contribution. Letters from paid consultants should include estimated fees and deliverables.

### □5. Budget

Using the instructions and the sample budget, complete the budget form (MS Excel format) or a format of your own that includes all the required information. (You can find links to the budget instructions, sample budget, and budget form on the [program resource page](#).) Submit your budget in a font of at least eleven points.

If you wish, you may attach separate pages with notes to explain any of the budget items in more detail.

**Identify all key project personnel by name on the budget form, and note the number of days that each of them will contribute to the project or the percent of their time to be devoted to the project.** Indicate in the budget if any of these individuals will perform different and separately budgeted functions.

- Be sure to include travel expenses, per diem, and lodging for a project directors' meeting at the NEH offices in Washington, DC.
- Be sure that the budget reflects the involvement of all consultants and humanities advisers.
- If you are requesting funding for a Position in Public Humanities, include in the budget line items for the new hire's salary and fringe benefits for two years of the grant. Up to \$30,000 in salary may be charged to NEH for each of the two years. Applicants that wish to increase the salary above \$30,000 must use their own funds to do so. Applicants must also use their own funds to pay for the employee's benefits. Note that institutions would be required to pay benefits to the person hired equal to the benefits of a typical employee.
- If the applicant institution has a federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement and is claiming indirect costs, submit a copy of the agreement. Do not attach the agreement to your budget form. Instead you must attach it to the Budget Narrative Attachment Form (also known as the Budget Narrative File). (See the instructions for this form in the Application Checklist at the end of the main guidelines document.) Alternatively, you must attach a statement to the form, explaining a) that the applicant institution is not claiming indirect costs; b) that the applicant institution does not currently have a federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement; c) that the applicant institution is a sponsorship (umbrella) organization, which will charge an administrative fee of 5 percent of the total direct costs; or d) that the applicant institution is using the government-wide rate of up to 10 percent of the total direct costs, less distorting items (including but not limited to capital expenditures, participant stipends, fellowships, and the portion of each subgrant or subcontract in excess of \$25,000).
- Indirect costs are computed by applying a negotiated indirect-cost rate to a distribution base (typically a portion of the direct costs of the project). If the applicant institution is claiming indirect costs and has a current federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement, include on the budget form the following information: a) the indirect-cost rate; b) the federal agency with which the agreement was negotiated; and c) the date of the agreement.
- Organizations that wish to include overhead charges in the budget but do not have a current federally negotiated indirect-cost rate or have not submitted a pending indirect-cost proposal to a federal agency may choose one of the following options:
  1. NEH will not require the formal negotiation of an indirect-cost rate, provided that the charge for indirect costs does not exceed the government-wide rate of up to 10 percent of direct costs, less distorting items (including, but not limited to, capital expenditures, participant stipends, fellowships, and the portion of each individual subgrant or subcontract in excess of \$25,000). This option is not available to a sponsorship or umbrella organization—that is, an organization that applies for a grant on behalf of an organization that may not be eligible to apply directly to NEH for a grant. Applicants choosing this option should

understand that they must maintain documentation to support overhead charges claimed as part of project costs.

2. If your organization wishes to use a rate higher than 10 percent, provide on the budget form an estimate of the indirect-cost rate and the charges. If the application is approved for funding, the award document will provide instructions on how to negotiate an indirect-cost rate with NEH.

#### □6. Bibliography

Include a short bibliography (not to exceed three pages) of the most significant humanities scholarship that informs the project

#### □7. Additional Information (if applicable)

**If applicable, you must submit the following additional information in a single attachment:**

##### ○ **User-Generated Content**

If the project includes user-generated content (UGC), describe how it will add to the humanities content and explain the criteria and process to be used for selecting and monitoring the content that will ultimately be made available to the public. Describe the policies and process to be used to prevent the dissemination of obscene, libelous, indecent, or defamatory content (including hate speech, personal attacks, or material constituting harassment).

##### ○ **Digital Media**

If your project includes significant digital media components, provide an example of previously completed work from the principal members of the digital team. The program would prefer to have this work available through a URL included in the application but would also accept a DVD, if this is the most appropriate format. (When you include a URL, be sure to test it in both PC and MAC environments from the final PDF version of the document that you will submit.) Clearly indicate that this URL is your digital work sample. Identify the project personnel who worked on this sample and, if relevant, include additional information on the audience or distribution of the work sample. If you are submitting a DVD, please see the instructions in the “How to Submit Digital Samples and/or Supplementary Material” in section IV of the guidelines.

##### ○ **Publications**

If applicable, describe the content (including brief abstracts of essays), author(s), format, estimated print run, distribution plans, and sale price of any publications for which funding is requested. Explain how these publications will complement the project’s other formats.

Proceeds from the sale of any publications will be subject to the NEH policy on program income, which is outlined [here](#).

□8. Supplementary material

Applicants may choose to submit no more than **one** supplementary item, such as a facilitator's guidebook from a previous discussion program, lecture program flyer, detailed outlines of previously conducted programs, or recommended reading lists for past programs. Provide a brief description of the supplementary item. When possible, provide a URL for the supplementary item or submit it as a PDF via Grants.gov.

Remember to test URLs in both PC and MAC environments from the final PDF version of the document that you will submit. If you are submitting a supplementary item that is not available as a URL and cannot be scanned and submitted to Grants.gov as a PDF, follow the instructions in the "How to Submit Digital Samples and/or Supplementary Material" in section IV of the guidelines.

□9. Information about a requested Position in Public Humanities (if applicable)

Applicants seeking support to create a Position in Public Humanities should justify the request in this section of the application. You can find detailed instructions about the information to provide [here](#) (PDF).